

Early in January, 1864, we were started again and were carried through Richmond and Petersburg and thence to Garysburg, N. C. Our men began almost to believe the rumor that we were being carried to North Carolina to hunt up deserters. Unpleasant as such duty would have been, there was rejoicing at the thought of being nearer home, and with a pathos that cannot be described the men sang Gaston's glorious hymn:

"Carolina, Carolina, Heaven's blessings attend her,"  
 "Long as I live I will protect and defend her."

Taking the cars again, we headed towards Weidon, but there, instead of going on the Gaston road, we went towards Goldsboro and thence to Kinston. We joined in the expedition to Newbern, took part in the engagement at Batchelor's Creek Bridge and formed our line in sight of the enemy's breastworks, in front of Newbern. But no attack was made. After a day or two there, we marched back to Kinston.

When we left Kinston we were carried by way of Goldsboro and Rocky Mount to Tarboro, and thence were marched hurriedly to Plymouth.

We took part in the storming of the outer works and final capture of Plymouth. It was in this battle and whilst storming Fort Wessels that we first had to contend with hand-grenades. Whilst our men were in the ditch around the fort the enemy threw hand-grenades quite freely, but they did not prove to be very destructive, and the fort soon surrendered. This was about dark on the first day, and the surrender of this fort brought us in front of the main line of works around the town.

Early in the morning the battle was renewed all along the line, and the Ram Albemarle was brought down the river to assist. The battle soon resulted in the capture of the town, with a large number of prisoners and considerable stores. We then marched on Little Washington on Tar River, but the enemy vacated it before we got there.

Spring was now well advanced and serious work was threatened in Virginia. Grant was moving on the Rapidan,

and the Petersburg & Weldon Rail Road was threatened by troops on the South side of the James. We were hurried back towards Richmond, but were stopped near Bellfield and Hicksford to protect the bridges in that neighborhood for a few days. Then we were carried to Petersburg to prevent Butler's forces from capturing the city. Then Butler, failing to get into Petersburg, made a heavy demonstration, out from Bermuda Hundreds, threatening the Petersburg & Richmond Rail Road. We were marched over there. Butler failed to take the Rail Road, and, as has been said, *was bottled up*.

We were marched over to Richmond and northward towards Fredericksburg, and next formed in line of battle a little to the north of Hanover Junction. We were back with the army of Northern Virginia again.

An attack from Grant's army was hourly expected. But there was no general engagement, only some skirmishing on our part of the line. As Gen. Grant swung around down the river, we were marched so as to conform to his movements, and keep between him and Richmond. When he got to a point nearly north of Richmond he crossed over the Paununkey River and advanced directly toward the city. Our line was along the Totapotamoie.

On Sunday evening, May 29th, 1864, the writer of this sketch had his own company and two other companies, on the skirmish line, quite hotly engaged until dark. After nightfall everything was quiet, and early in the morning, before it was light, we had orders to fall back to the main-line. But hardly had we gotten back to the regiment when orders were brought to him to take the same men back to the same skirmish line, and hold it until heavily pressed by the enemy; and, as they pressed us, to fall back to the main line. We were soon in our place, and it was not long before the enemy came up in force in our front, and as far as we could see to our right and to our left. We were on the north side of the creek, along the brow of the hill; in front of us was a level field, in our rear was a valley which had been cleared for cultivation, and the ground sloped from